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Terrorism: Avoidance And Survival

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Special Note on Security

This little booklet won't take long to read, but it could save your life. Keep a copy at your desk and take a copy home for the members of your family. The information in this booklet is as much for them as for you.

U.S. Government Policy

US Government policy on hijacking and all other forms of terrorism have been frequently stated and is summarized as follows:

1. We condemn all terrorist acts as criminal and intolerable, whatever their motivation.
2. We take all lawful measures to prevent terrorist acts and bring to justice those who commit them.
3. We make no concessions to terrorist blackmail because to do so would merely invite further demands.
4. When Americans are abducted overseas, we look to the host government to exercise its responsibility under international law to protect all persons within its territories and to bring about the safe release of hostages.
5. We maintain close contact with the host government during an incident, supporting it with all practicable intelligence and technical services.
6. We understand the extreme difficulty of the decisions governments are often call upon to make, given the need to reconcile the objectives of saving the lives of the hostages and making sure that the terrorists gain no benefit from their acts.
7. International cooperation to combat terrorism is essential, since all governments, regardless of structure or philosophy, are vulnerable. We intend to pursue all avenues to strengthen such cooperation.

Terrorism: Avoidance And Survival

Introduction

There is no universally accepted definition of terrorism. Basically, the problem has been a matter of perspective. One man's freedom fighter is often another man's terrorist. In the absence of domestic terrorism in the United States we have tended to view the problem of terrorism in a somewhat distant and detached manner. We have expressed shock at events such as Munich, Lod and Entebbe and yet, until our Embassy was seized in Tehran, the reality of terrorism seemed remote. However, as members of the US foreign affairs community, experience has taught us we cannot accept popular attitudes toward terrorism. Khartoum and Kuala Lumpur have a far too special significance attached to them. Incidents throughout Central and South America, Africa and the Mideast attest to the impact of terrorism upon those who serve our government abroad.

Why are American officials targeted? Sometimes it is the result of an exaggerated belief by terrorist groups in the US Government's ability to influence events. More often it is the result of the fact that to radical extremist groups our capitalist society is the symbol of what they oppose. Regardless of the reason, terrorism will always take on a very special and personal meaning to those of us who become its victims.

Most terrorists have limited resources. They work in small groups. Generally, they prefer highly visible targets. They often select a target

where security procedures are weak and resistance is likely to be minimal. Obviously those who are less security conscious present easier targets.

This booklet is intended for those who will serve overseas and are committed to the safety of their families, their colleagues and themselves. Acceptance of the suggestions offered will deny terrorists the unwitting assistance of their potential targets, and thereby raise the odds against success for terrorist acts. ■

The Family

Every member of your family must be security conscious. Your attitude regarding security awareness will automatically encourage your family to follow your leadership.

Encourage personal security consciousness within your family—you set the example.

Give your children the attention, supervision and love that is necessary to maintain their respect and confidence in your judgment concerning alcohol, narcotics, drugs and personal conduct in general.

Try to know the whereabouts of family members at all times. Notify another member if unforeseen delays interrupt a normal schedule.

The wife should avoid shopping at the same supermarket at the same time of the same day of the week. If possible, let the domestic help do the shopping.

If you have domestic help, make sure that they thoroughly understand their security responsibilities and duties.

Children should report to their parents any unusual incidents such as offers of rides or being followed.

Instruct school authorities that under no circumstances are your children to be picked up by anyone unless authorized by you or your wife.

Establish some sort of curfew for your children depending on the local situation. ■

Travel Precautions

Experience has shown that a frequent tactic of international terrorists is to abduct people from the automobiles while traveling either to or from work. These are times of the day when an individual's movements are most predictable. There are, however, actions that can be taken to reduce the prospects of being targeted.

THREAT ASSESSMENT is the place to begin. Find out if there is a current or potential problem from terrorism, civil disorder or the criminal element. If so, determine how it relates to you. It is important to be aware of the latest terrorist threat level and ADJUST YOUR LIFE-STYLE ACCORDINGLY.

Become totally familiar with the environment in which you live. Be observant. Know what is normal so that you will be able to detect the unusual. Remember—terrorists need information to plan and to execute a successful action. Through surveillance, terrorists hope to be able to determine routine habits, routine movement patterns, and to assess the potential target's most vulnerable areas. By taking basic security precautions, you not only disrupt their information-gathering efforts, but in so doing demonstrate a degree of security consciousness which could cause the terrorists to shift their attention to a "softer" target.

Remember that when dealing with terrorism, PREDICTABILITY IS YOUR GREATEST ENEMY. Whenever possible, vary the times and routes of your travel. Select several possible routes to use when traveling back and forth to work and use them randomly.

Regardless of what you do, you still have to leave home and to arrive at the office. It is particularly important that you are especially alert for possible signs of surveillance in the vicinity of these areas. Remember, NOT ALL

SURVEILLANCE IS DONE WITH AN AUTOMOBILE. Many terrorist organizations use "static surveillance techniques." For example, someone watches from the opposite side of the street of your residence or office to observe your daily departure and arrival. Check to see if there are people exhibiting more than a casual interest in your movements.

Part of your route selection process should include consideration of available safe havens along the way. Safe havens are facilities or locations, e.g., police stations, hospitals, government offices, etc., that provide assistance and protection to you in event of an emergency. In selecting a route, preference should be given to multilaned, well-traveled streets with as few stops as possible. Remember that by traveling in the centermost lane of traffic, it is more difficult for a terrorist to approach a vehicle on foot, or to initiate a vehicular cutoff action.

If you feel you are being followed, circle the block to determine if the suspect vehicle stays with you. If it does, remain calm and seek immediate assistance from your predesignated safe havens. Don't play games with the surveillance car or try to outrun it. Instead, try to determine the make and color of the vehicle(s), license numbers and any noteworthy characteristics concerning the occupants. It is essential that you continue to concentrate on what is happening in front of you. This will greatly reduce the risks of an accident or the danger of driving into a roadblock. Be sure to REPORT ALL POSSIBLE CASES OF SURVEILLANCE TO THE POST SECURITY OFFICER.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUR PERSONAL SECURITY

Travel Precautions

1. Keep your vehicle in good repair and

your gas tank at least half-full at all times.

2. Lock your car doors, keep windows closed and fasten your seat belts. Always lock car doors when leaving a vehicle.
3. Communicate frequently; let others know your location and how you can be reached.
4. Always examine your vehicle before entering it for any evidence of tampering or for any unexplained objects. Do not handle suspicious items.
5. Check for shuffle marks on the pavement next to the vehicle; fingerprints on the doors, hood and trunk.
6. Look for wires or tape hanging from the undercarriage of the vehicle.
7. Make certain that tires are not blocked.

As you can see, many of these guidelines are common sense. Follow them each day as part of your daily routine. ■

Public Transportation

Generally, a privately owned automobile provides a greater degree of security for its occupants than public transportation. In a car you have greater mobility and more alternatives in selecting routes and considering evacuation capabilities. In addition, a car offers a small but controlled environment for its occupants and provides the driver with a very powerful weapon which can be used to escape either a crowd or terrorist situation.

In some countries, however, public transportation offers a viable alternative to the automobile. From a security standpoint, there are a number of factors that should be considered in determining the advisability of using public transportation. You should assess the general threat and current attitudes of the population towards Americans. If tensions are high, or if an unusual security situation exists, public transportation should not be used. One should always attempt to ride with a companion or in a group. Two other factors should also be considered:

1. Anonymity. Consider to what extent your physical features and dress distinguish you from the local populace. If you feel conspicuous using public transportation, then arrange other means.

2. Language Capability. Being able to speak the language will enable you to call for help if needed, ask for directions, or handle routine problems. ■

Hostage Survival

Terrorism distinguishes itself from other forms of violence by the fact that the intended target is not actually the victim seized. The real target is that group of people beyond the terrorist's reach whom he wants to intimidate through acts of violence. But what of the victim? His fears, frustrations and concerns are going to be just as real, regardless of the role he plays. Every hostage situation is different. There are no strict rules of behavior; however, discussions with previous hostage victims suggest that there are steps that can be taken to minimize the effects of a hostage situation.

First, there must be a recognition that it can happen. Develop a family contingency plan for security-related emergencies. If abducted:

1. Consider under what circumstances your family should return to the United States.

2. Make arrangements so that your family can continue to meet their financial obligations. Ensure that your spouse has access to your checking and savings accounts, and family financial holdings. Make sure your will is current, accurate and complete. Make certain that proper power of attorney arrangements have been made.

3. Be certain that you can explain everything you have on your person.

If taken hostage, there are recommendations which can be followed to enhance your ability to cope and see the incident through to your successful release.

1. After being seized, don't fight back or attempt to aggravate the hostage taker. You may be blindfolded and/or drugged.

2. Fear can sometimes be overwhelming and paralyzing. Although fear of death may be realistic, recognizing your reactions may help you to adapt more effectively.

3. Regain your composure as soon as possible. Pause, take a deep breath and attempt to organize your thoughts. Try to determine where you are being taken. Take mental notes of your abductors, their mannerisms and their apparent rank structure.

4. Be prepared to be accused of being a member of the CIA.

5. Anticipate isolation and possible efforts by the hostage takers to disorient you.

6. Exercise daily. If possible develop a physical exercise program and stick with it, regardless of how you feel.

7. Be prepared for a loss of appetite and weight.

8. Be as mentally active and creative as possible. Write, read books, study languages and even consider solutions to problems at work.

9. Once settled in, don't be afraid to ask for anything you need or want (e.g., medicines, books, pencils, papers). The worst they can do is to deny the request.

10. Eat what they give you. It might not look or taste good but it is not poison.

11. Attempt to develop a rapport with your hostage takers. Speak with them and find mutual areas of interest which

emphasize personal rather than political and ideological beliefs and experiences.

12. At all times maintain your dignity and self-respect. Your actions should command respect, not demand respect.

13. Comply with the instructions of your abductors as well as you can.■

REMEMBER: AS TIME PROGRESSES, YOUR CHANCES OF SURVIVAL INCREASE.

Bomb Search Techniques

The best system to use in searching for a suspect device is to have those people who work in a particular area conduct the search. Even though these people have not been trained in explosive devices, they will be the ones most familiar with the area and, therefore, best able to detect anything that might look suspicious or out of place.

In conducting a search, start in the center of a room by closing your eyes and opening your mouth. You might feel silly but this will provide you with maximum hearing sensitivity and perhaps help you locate the ticking of the timed device.

Next, proceed with an orderly search of your area. Be systematic and don't overlook anything. If you find a suspect device, DON'T TOUCH IT! Call the post security officer for further assistance.■

Improvised Explosive Devices

Bombs are another form of terrorism. Often explosive devices are disguised as packages, books or letters. To defend against such practices, it is generally recommended that all mail be delivered through the embassy where strict mail inspection is practiced. If mail is delivered to your residence, there are basic guidelines you should follow:

1. Do not accept unexpected packages or parcels without a return address.
2. If an unexpected package is delivered, verify the sender before accepting it.

3. Examine mail to determine if it has been tampered with.
4. Visually examine parcels and letters from some of the more suspicious characteristics of a postal bomb:
   a. No return address or unfamiliar return address.
   b. Arrival by international mail.
   c. Excessive postage.
   d. Letters that weigh two to five ounces.
   e. Items marked conspicuously with the words "Confidential," "Personal" or "Eyes Only."
5. Isolate any suspect letters or packages.
6. Notify the post security officer and evacuate the immediate area.
7. Abandoned vehicles have been used as bombs. If one has been left near your home, notify the post security officer. ■

Telephone Bomb Threat Procedures

It is extremely important to be prepared to handle a telephonic threat. The data collected will assist the post security officer with management of the incident.

Instructions: Be calm, courteous and listen. Do not interrupt the caller. Use this form to gather information which will be useful in countering the threat. The form should be placed near a telephone.

Bomb Threat Report Form

Date: _____ Time: _____

1. Name of Recipient: _____

2. Exact words of threat: _____

_____

_____

3. Questions to ask:

   a. **When** will the bomb explode?
   b. **Where** is the bomb located?
   c. **What** kind is it and what does it look like?
   d. **Why** are you threatening us?

4. Identification of the Caller (circle appropriate words)

   Identify: Male Female Adult Child

   Voice: Loud Soft High Deep Pleasant Drunk Harsh Raspy

   Accent: Yes No English Foreign Local Unfamiliar

   Speech: Fast Slow Clear Slurred Stutter Calm Excited Angry Scared Nasal Lisp

   Language: Good Poor Obscene Educated Slang

   Background Noise: Office/Factory Street-/Traffic Trains/Airplanes Party Atmosphere Quiet/Arguments

5. Other helpful information:

   a. Did the caller appear familiar with a residence or building by the description of the location of the device?

   b. Could the call have been made from a phone booth?

   c. Other comments.

REMEMBER: THERE ARE NO RULES OR LINES OF DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN A HOAX CALL AND THE REAL THREAT. ■

Residential Security

In addition to the serious threat posed by terrorists, the security problem is compounded by a disturbing increase in conventional crimes against the employee and the family. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that in many instances the response of local law enforcement authorities is often unpredictable and inadequate.

As a result, emphasis should be placed on security measures that deter rather than detect or apprehend. We know that burglars select sites based on vulnerability/risk factors. In selecting a residence the object of a concerned employee should be to choose one with built-in-security features. Evaluate the security features of your residence and consider what is required in order to make it less vulnerable than that of your neighbor, and, therefore, less desirable as a possible target for burglary.

Here are a few general suggestions to consider:

1. A well designed and professionally managed apartment is usually more secure than a single dwelling unit.
2. Select a residence with alternative routes for arrivals and departures. Avoid dead end streets.
3. Assuming an acceptable skill level, consider the accessibility to the residence by the police, the fire department and hospital services.
4. Find out if there are other embassy personnel in the neighborhood who could be called on for assistance.
5. The best all around preventive/detection alarm system for fires and burglary is a dog.

6. Every residence, regardless of whether it's an apartment or single dwelling unit, should have a safe haven and communication system which will permit outside notification of a need for assistance.

7. In most instances, weapons are not considered a desirable asset for residential security.

8. Meet your neighbors and involve them in your mutual security.

It is to your advantage to view your residence from a criminal's point of view. Where there are weak access points, correct them by installing security doors and windows with good locks. The effectiveness of a good residential security program ultimately depends on how well the family practices good security habits.

The following is a Residential Security Evaluation questionnaire which points out security features desirable in a residence. It also serves as a handy reference for examining your residence to determine what weak points exist. ■

Apartment Dwellings

	Yes	No	N/A
a. Is the apartment located above ground level, but below the 10th floor? (Note: fire apparatus of most cities will not reach above the 10th floor.)	___	___	___
b. Does the building practice access control, i.e., doorman, receptionist or keyed front door?	___	___	___

c. Are public access areas, e.g., lobbies, corridors, stairwells, well lighted? ___ ___ ___

WINDOWS

a. Are window locks securely mounted and properly installed? ___ ___ ___

b. Have you installed window locks that cannot be opened, even if the glass is broken? ___ ___ ___

c. Are sliding windows and doors secured with charley bars and keyed channel locks? ___ ___ ___

d. If grillwork is employed, is it properly secured? More importantly, does it provide a means of escape if required during a fire? ___ ___ ___

e. Are locking handles used on casement-type windows? ___ ___ ___

f. Do your second story windows have the same degree of security as your ground floor windows? ___ ___ ___

g. Would you need to use a window in the event of a fire? ___ ___ ___

GARAGE:

a. Do doors leading off the garage into the residence have the same security strengths as your front door? ___ ___ ___

b. Are all garage doors and windows equipped with adequate locks? ___ ___ ___

c. Can your garage door be pulled out on one side, or from the bottom to permit someone to crawl inside? ___ ___ ___

d. Are all tools stored in the garage secured and out of sight? ___ ___ ___

Miscellaneous Residential Security Precautions and Suggestions:

	Yes	No	N/A
a. Has the post security officer conducted a residential security survey?	___	___	___
b. Has your household help been screened prior to hiring?	___	___	___
c. Have you given instructions to your household help and family members on how to handle deliveries, visitors, etc.? (Unexpected packages should not be accepted.)	___	___	___
d. Have you instructed your children and household staff to report suspicious people or incidents to you?	___	___	___
e. Do you maintain your residence in a manner that doesn't attract attention to it, or blatantly suggest that an American lives there?	___	___	___
f. Do you keep valuables out of sight when workmen enter your residence?	___	___	___
g. Do you have an insurance inventory of your valuables?	___	___	___
h. Do you hide keys under a rock or under the door mat? (Such practices should be stopped.)	___	___	___

i. Are you acquainted with your neighbors? (They're one of your best defenses against burglars.) ___ ___ ___

j. Are all members of your family regularly trained in the use of weapons? (If not, do not consider having a weapon as a safeguard against burglars or intruders. Mace is a much preferred alternative.) ___ ___ ___

k. Are members of your family aware that if a burglary should occur while they are at home they should not confront or attempt to corner the intruder? (Go to your safe haven, lock the door and seek assistance through your emergency communication.) ___ ___ ___

l. Are all emergency phone numbers posted on the telephone? ___ ___ ___

An adequate residential security system must function while the residents are at home as well as when the residence is unoccupied. ■

Your residence is only as secure as it is at its weakest point of access. If you are uncertain of any point, improve it. The extra dollars it may cost to make your residence secure will be well spent.

Domestic Help

All domestic help in a household—even gardeners who may work only once a week—must be security checked. Any one of them could be an informant for a terrorist organization, advising of the comings, goings and other activities of the family. The domestic help "who wouldn't steal a dime" might be honest but he/she might also be a political activist.

The family should not discuss its plans within the hearing of the domestic help, expecially in regards to any trips, or visits by visiting VIPs.

No letters or other material should be left lying around.

Do not discuss business activities within hearing of the domestic help.

Tell the domestic help as little as possible in advance when visitors are coming to the house.

If the domestic help is left at home when you go out, do not inform the domestic help of your expected hour of return.

If a domestic help is given time off while the family goes on vacation, do not tell the domestic help when the family will return. Phone or contact the domestic help after returning. ■

Emergency

Write in your number

Fire	
Police	
Doctor	
Dentist	
Health Unit	
Bombs & Bomb Threats	
Repair & Emergency Assistance	

Report any unusual incidents to your superiors and to a U.S. security representative. Don't handle the problem yourself.